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Reagan Meets With His Foreign Policy Advisory Board

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President-elect Ronald Reagan met for the first time yesterday with his interim foreign policy advisory board, a high-powered, bipartisan group that includes former president Ford and several other national figures. Missing, however, was George Shultz, a former secretary of the treasury who has been prominently mentioned as a possible secretary of state in the Reagan administration.

Shultz is president of the Bechtel Corp. in San Francisco and was unable to attend the Washington meeting because of a company board meeting in California. His absence here, however, was viewed as "very significant" by one of the participants in the meeting, which went on for most of the day behind closed doors in the Senate and at Reagan headquarters in downtown Washington.

Sen. Howard H. Baker (R-Tenn.), one of the participants, later described the meeting as "a truly extraordinary forum." It included, besides Ford, former Nixon-Ford administration officials Henry A. Kissinger, Alexander Haig, Caspar W. Weinberger and Donald Rumsfeld; Sens. Baker, Henry M. Jackson (D-Wash.), John Tower (R-Tex.) and Richard Stone (D-Fla.); Texas Gov. William P. Clements, former ambassadors Anne Armstrong and John McCloy, and advisers Jeane Kirkpatrick, Eugene Roslow and Edward Bennett Williams.

Top Carter administration officials, including Secretary of State Edmund Muskie, Defense Secretary Harold Brown and CIA chief Stansfield Turner, took part in portions of the meeting, providing briefings on current defense, foreign policy and intelligence situations for the Reagan group.

Reagan and Vice President-elect George Bush joined the group for about 10 minutes at the downtown headquarters yesterday morning just before Reagan left for California.

Reagan campaign director William Casey told reporters later that the president-elect stressed his intent to carry on a bipartisan foreign policy.

Casey said the day-long gathering was meant to organize a comprehensive review of the foreign policy problems and opportunities that will face the new administration. The idea, he said, is for the committee to come up with a set of recommendations and evaluations of various situations in a report that can be presented to Reagan shortly before the inauguration in January.

The group, he said, would meet again early in December.

Kissinger said, "Almost every topic you can imagine was discussed." Baker called it "the most substantive meeting" he had ever seen in his 14 years in the Senate.

Asked about his own role, Kissinger reiterated that he would be available for special assignment and advice but that "I don't expect to play a full-time role" in the new administration.

Asked what he thought about reports that his former deputy and ex-NATO commander Haig might become secretary of state, Kissinger said Haig was a "distinguished American" and would be an outstanding selection.

Haig and Shultz are the two names most commonly mentioned for the State Department post, though Reagan again said yesterday that no decisions have been made yet on his Cabinet ap-

pointments. Shultz reportedly has told friends that he has some doubts about taking the post, if offered, and in an interview with The Boston Globe Thursday, he acknowledged that if he had any differences with Reagan, they probably lie in Middle East policy.

Some participants at yesterday's meeting also said they detected a notable lack of communication between Tower, who would like to be secretary of defense, and Clements, who reportedly would like to see Tower remain as incoming chairman of the powerful Senate Armed Services Committee for the next Congress. It was reported yesterday that Tower's chances of getting the Pentagon post are now not good.

Later in the day, Reagan, aboard his plane en route to California, also seemed to indicate, according to United Press International, that Tower's status in the Senate would work against his being appointed to the defense post.

"I think the consideration with anyone who is in the legislature would have to be whether you would want to reduce" the Republican majority there, he told reporters. Asked if that would apply to Tower, Reagan replied, "Yes." He said he would take the Senate situation into account when making his appointments.